

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 DAMASC 02309 251052Z

ACTION INR-10

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 NSAE-00 SSC-01 SS-15 NSC-05

/042 W

-----047743 251252Z /50

R 250714Z APR 78

FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7749

INFO CIA WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L DAMASCUS 2309

E.O. 11652: XGDS-2

TAGS: PINR, PINT, SY

SUBJ: SAFWAN AL-QUDSI: MINISTER OF STATE

1. SAFWAN AL-QUDSI ON MARCH 30, 1978, WAS NAMED TO THE NEW CABINET AS A MINISTER OF STATE. HE WAS BROUGHT OVER FROM THE PEOPLE'S COUNCIL BY THE NEW PRIME MINISTER MIHAMAD ALI AL-HALABI. QUDSI HAD BEEN ELECTED TO THE PEOPLE'S COUNCIL AUGUST 1, 1977, AT THE BOTTOM OF THE DAMASCUS CITY LIST OF "OTHER GROUPS OF THE PEOPLE" (I.E., OTHER THAN LABORERS AND PEASANTS). HE SERVED NOMINALLY ON THE COMMITTEE OF ORIENTATION AND GUIDANCE BUT WAS USED BY HALABI WHEN HE WAS PRESIDENT OF THE PEOPLE'S COUNCIL TO OVERSEE PROTOCOL AND ADMINISTRATION. AS A MINISTER OF STATE, QUDSI IS NOW EXPECTED TO HEAD UP THE PRIME MINISTER'S PRIVATE OFFICE. HE OWES HIS POSITION TO HALABI AND CAN BE COUNTED AMONG HALABI'S SUPPORTERS.

2. QUDSI IS A MEMBER OF THE ARAB SOCIALIST UNION PARTY AND IN 1977 WAS ELECTED SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE PARTY. IN SPITE OF THIS POSITION QUDSI HAS NO REAL POLITICAL BASE SINCE HIS PARTY, ONE OF THE CONSTITUENT ELEMENTS OF THE PROGRESSIVE NATIONAL FRONT, IS TOTALLY SUBSERVIENT TO THE BAATH PARTY AND IS MORE NOMINAL THAN REAL. QUDSI HAS BEEN A MEMBER OF THE EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE SYRIAN UNION OF ARAB WRITERS SINCE 1975, WHERE HE WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR SOCIAL AFFAIRS.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 DAMASC 02309 251052Z

HIS MEMBERSHIP IN THE UNION WAS BASED ON HIS BACKGROUND AS EDITORIAL SECRETARY OF "AL MAAREFA" MAGAZINE FROM 1972-74 AND THEN AS EDITOR-IN-CHIEF OF THE MAGAZINE FROM 1974-78. "AL-MAAREFA" IS A MONTHLY PUBLICATION DEVOTED TO LITERATURE AND THE ARTS PUBLISHED BY THE MINISTRY OF CULTURE. QUDSI ALSO PUBLISHED TWO BOOKS "ARMED POLICY" IN 1974, A STUDY ON CONTEMPORARY POLITICAL THOUGHT AND "FACE AND MASK" IN

1977, STUDIES ON POLITICAL FACTS AND POTENTIALITIES. QUDSI
GRADUATED FROM DAMASCUS UNIVERSITY IN 1966 WITH A BACHELOR'S
DEGREE IN PHILOSOPHY.

3. QUDSI'S STRENGTH AND POTENTIAL COMES MORE FROM HIS
ABILITY TO EFFICIENTLY HANDLE PROTOCOL AND ADMINISTRATION
THEN FROM HIS POLITICAL POSITION OR HIS INTELLECTUAL PURSUITS.
HE WAS BORN IN 1940 TO A WELL KNOWN ANCIENT REGIME SUNNI
DAMASCUS FAMILY WHICH COUNTS A FORMER PRESIDENT OF SYRIA
AMONG ITS RELATIONS. HE IS MARRIED AND HAS TWO CHILDREN.
HE SPEAKS ENGLISH AND FRENCH. HIS BROTHER, MUWAFFAQ, IS A
FORMER AMBASSADOR WHO NOW SERVES AS DIRECTOR OF THE PROTOCOL
DIVISION OF THE FOREIGN MINISTRY.
PELLETREAU

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: CABINET, PERSONNEL APPOINTMENTS, INTELLIGENCE ASSESSMENTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 25 apr 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978DAMASC02309
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: X2
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780176-0367
Format: TEL
From: DAMASCUS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780421/aaaaarhx.tel
Line Count: 76
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: c71349a8-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION INR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 07 mar 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2863044
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SAFWAN AL-QUDSI: MINISTER OF STATE
TAGS: PINR, PINT, SY, (AL-QUDSI, SAFWAN)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/c71349a8-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014